

About the Commission

The Cook County Commission on Women's Issues was created by resolution of the Cook County Board of Commissioners in October of 1995. The Commission is composed of twenty-one women of various racial, economic, ethnic, and occupational backgrounds, including representatives of each of the seventeen Districts across Cook County, appointed by each District's County Commissioner, and four at-large commissioners, appointed by the President of the Cook County Board.

The Commission advises the President and members of the Cook County Board of Commissioners on issues of concern to women and girls. It develops policy and program recommendations and collaborates with a wide range of governmental and private sector organizations on projects addressing a variety of issues, including domestic violence, child care, economic equity, and health. The Commission works to elevate the status of women and girls of Cook County, improve the delivery of services to women and their families, and eliminate inequalities in laws, practices, and conditions that impact Cook County.

If you would like more information about the Women's Commission or are interested in future commission activities, please contact the office.

Cook County Commission on Women's Issues
Department of Human Rights and Ethics
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Toni Preckwinkle

President,
Cook County Board of Commissioners

Peggy A. Montes

Chairperson

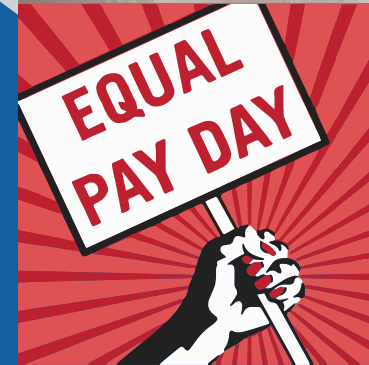
Commissioners

Jennifer Artis
Sharon Brannigan
Ally Brisbin
Dr. Frances G. Carroll
Dorian K. Carter
Rebecca Darr
Vera Davis
Linda Fleming
Dr. Harvette Grey
Jeylu B. Gutierrez
Trina Janes
Dr. Ann Kalayil
Marjorie A. Manchen
Iris Millan
Echelle Mohn
Andrea A. Raila
Terri Rivera
Hon. Ginger Rugai
Dr. Aparna Sen-Yeldandi
Jacquelyn M. Small

Amy Crawford

Deputy Director
Human Rights and Ethics

www.cookcountyil.gov/cccw



The Cook County Commission on Women's Issues

Annual Public Hearing

Each year the Commission holds a public hearing on a topic that is critical to the advancement and well being of women and girls. Past topics have included breast cancer and its impact on special populations, elder care, girls at risk, the local impact of human trafficking, issues of economic empowerment for women and girls, affordable housing, sexual health, and criminal justice reform. This testimony provides the foundation for recommendations to the Board of Commissioners about changes that need to take place to better serve women and girls in Cook County.



President Toni Preckwinkle, Commissioner Daley, Chairperson Montes, and Lanetta Haynes Turner, Executive Director of the Justice Advisory Council, at the 2015 Public Hearing on Graduated Reentry



Commissioners Raila and Millan conduct a women's housing financial seminar in 2016

Special Programs, Forums, and Seminars

Interagency/Organization Collaborations

The Commission collaborates with city, state and federal government agencies, and private sector organizations to co-sponsor events such as "Women's Equality Day," celebrating the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, "Equal Pay Day," the day when a woman's wages catch up to a man's wages from the previous year, and "Equal Work Deserves Equal Pay: A Conversation with Lilly Ledbetter."



President Toni Preckwinkle speaks at the Equal Pay Day Rally in 2016

Child Care

The Commission was instrumental in implementing daycare and early education with the Cook County/City of Chicago Child Development Center. The Center provides high quality early childhood education to approximately 112 children, ages six weeks to five years old, of County and City employees. Bright Horizons Family Solutions, a leading expert in the arena of employer sponsored care, operates the Center. The facility also serves as a training center for current and future child care educators.

Educational Seminars

The Commission conducts seminars and forums throughout Cook County related to each annual public hearing topic. In the past, the Commission has held a screening and discussion of the award-winning film "Girls on the Wall," a film about incarcerated teenage girls, as well as seminars on "Hurting in Silence: Breaking the Barrier," a discussion on teen bullying; the "Young Women's Healthy Choices Forum"; and the "Human Trafficking Community Forum," which educated the public on the issue of human trafficking in and beyond Cook County.

Peggy A. Montes Unsung Heroine Awards

As an annual event in observance of Women's History Month, Cook County presents the Unsung Heroine Award to 18 women, one from each district of Cook County and one county-wide, whose contributions to their communities, families and professional endeavors have been so vital, but seldom recognized. This award, consistent with the purpose of Women's History Month, is designed to recover and tell the story of the powerful impact women have had throughout history on the development of our social, cultural, economic and political institutions. In this spirit, the County honors these remarkable women as a way to bring their stories to light. If you are interested in nominating an unsung heroine from your community, please visit our website at www.cookcountyil.gov/ccwi.



Commissioners and President Preckwinkle attending the 19th Annual Awards Breakfast in 2016

Peggy A. Montes serves as Chairperson of the Cook County Commission on Women's Issues. An educator, fundraiser, leader, and champion of women's rights, Montes was the driving force behind the very first Unsung Heroine Award for the women of Cook County. On March 16, 2010, the Cook County Board of Commissioners and members of the Commission on Women's Issues renamed the award in Montes' honor as a way of recognizing her remarkable achievements on behalf of women and girls.